GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3998
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2016
Pre-schooling of Muslim Children
Galla Shri Jayadev

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UNICEF in its globally released report has stressed that 34% of Muslim children do not attend pre-schooling;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government thereon;

(c) whether the Ministry is contemplating to reverse the trend not only in Muslims but also in Christians where 26% children do not attend preschool; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI)
(a) & (b): Rapid Survey on Children (RSOC), conducted by UNICEF in 29 states during 2013-14, indicates that 34% and 25.6% of Muslim and Christian children respectively (below the age group 6 years) do not attend any pre-school education.

(c) & (d): Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) is one of the six free services provided through the Anganwadi Centres (AWC) located across the country under the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Scheme being implemented by the Ministry of Women & Child Development as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The ICDS is a universal self-selecting Scheme available to all the beneficiaries who enrol at the AWCs irrespective of caste or religion. The ICDS Scheme aims at holistic development of children of target age group of 6 months to 6 years and the ECCE component seeks to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child while preparing for proper formal education.
The Government of India has reaffirmed its commitment to promote 'Early Childhood Care and Education' by formulating and notifying the 'National Early Childhood Care and Education policy'. The vision of National ECCE policy is to achieve holistic development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age by promoting free, universal, inclusive, equitable, joyful and contextualised opportunities for laying foundation and attaining full potential. It envisages improving pathways for a successful and smooth transition from care and education provided at home to centre based ECCE and thereafter to school-age provision by facilitating an enabling environment through appropriate systems, processes and provisions across the country. It recognizes the synergistic and interdependent relationship between the health, nutrition, psycho-social and emotional needs of the child.
ICDS Scheme has been universalized to cover 14 lakh habitations and about 3.50 crore children (3-6years) are attending Pre-School Education (PSE) at 13.50 lakh Anganwadi Centers as per information received from the States/UTs under ICDS Scheme as on 31.03.2016.
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